

REMARKS

This Amendment is being filed in response to the Office Action mailed June 12, 2008, which has been reviewed and carefully considered. Reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the amendments made above and the remarks to follow are respectfully requested.

By means of the present amendment, claims 1-9 and 11-16 have been amended for non-statutory reasons, such as beginning the dependent claims with 'The' instead of 'A', changing "characterized in that" to --wherein--, and deleting reference designations typically used in European practice that are known to not limit the scope of the claims. Such amendments to claims 1-9 and 11-16 were not made in order to address issues of patentability and Applicants respectfully reserve all rights under the Doctrine of Equivalents.

In the Office Action, the Examiner suggested adding headings to the specification. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's suggestion, however respectfully decline to add the headings as they are not required in accordance with MPEP §608.01(a), and could be inappropriately used in interpreting the

specification.

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the Abstract for including legal phraseology. In response, the current Abstract has been deleted and substituted with the enclosed New Abstract which better conforms to U.S. practice. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the Abstract is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 5 and 8 for certain informalities. Without agreeing with the position forwarded in the Office Action and in the interest of advancing prosecution, claims 5 and 8 have been amended to remove the informalities noted by the Examiner. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to claims 5 and 8 is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as allegedly indefinite. Without agreeing with the position forwarded in the Office Action and in the interest of advancing prosecution, claim 2 has been amended to remove the alleged informality noted in the Office Action. It is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 2 has been overcome and an indication as such is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 6 and

9-10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication that claims 6 and 9-10 contain patentable subject matter. By means of the present amendment, independent claims 1 and 15 have been amended to include the features of allowable claim 10 which has been canceled without prejudice. In addition, claim 6 has been rewritten in independent form without including certain features that are believed to be not necessary for patentability.


Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that independent claims 1, 6 and 15 be allowed. In addition, it is respectfully submitted that claims 2-5, 7-9, 11-14 and 16 should also be allowed at least based on their dependence from independent claims 1 and 15 as well as their individually patentable elements.

In addition, Applicants deny any statement, position or averment of the Examiner that is not specifically addressed by the foregoing argument and response. Any rejections and/or points of argument not addressed would appear to be moot in view of the presented remarks. However, the Applicants reserve the right to submit further arguments in support of the above stated position, should that become necessary. No arguments are waived and none of

the Examiner's statements are conceded.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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